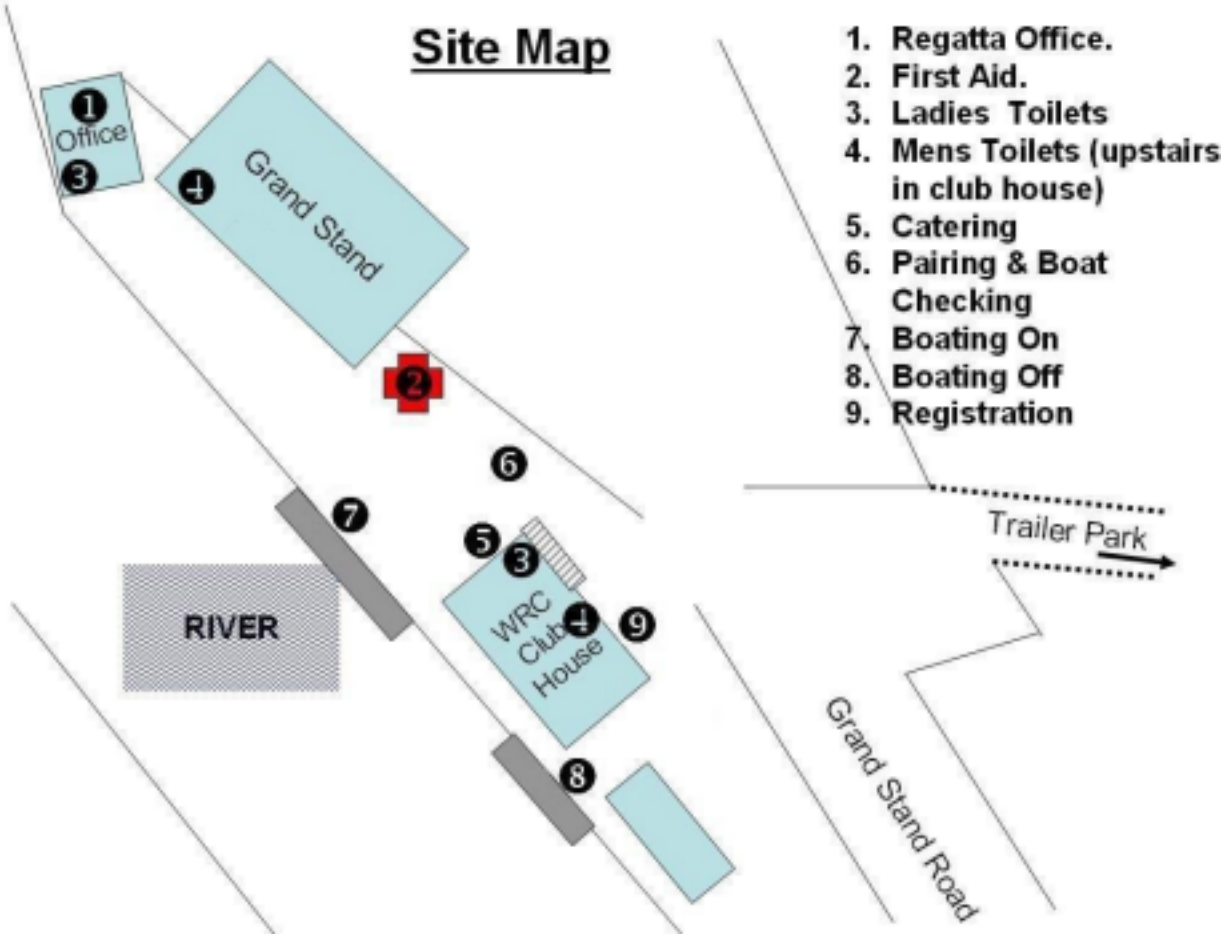
Worcester Rowing Club Autumn Regatta Safety Plan
Saturday 12th September 2026

Introduction

Worcester Autumn Regatta is held in September on the River Severn, downstream over approximately 850 meters between the Dog and Duck (alongside the Racecourse) and Sabrina Bridge using a free start. Typically, between 150 and 200 crews enter the event.



This safety plan has been compiled to complement RowSafe, and not to either replace or rewrite it. The safety plan explains local safety measures that have been introduced as a result of the event risk assessment and specific details linked to BR requirements.

Organising Committee

Event Organiser – Paul Holmes (07831 317794) and Nigel Morriss (07941 772 841)

Safety Advisor – Nigel Morriss (07941 772 841) and James Swann (07785 528357)

Chief Umpire – Paul Holmes (07831 317794)

Umpire – Andrew Payne (07760 225727)

Welfare Officer-Aidan Melarkey (07809 879645)

Communications

Permission to hold the event on the River Severn has been obtained from the Canal and River Trust. Other river users and local organisations will be informed of the event by e-mail, to include: Canoe Club

Dragon Boat Club

Anglers Association
Severn Motor Yacht Company
Worcester Racecourse

Competitors, umpires, marshals and organisers will be made aware of the safety arrangements to enable incidents to be dealt with efficiently during the event.

1) Course maps and emergency procedures will be posted on the website, displayed at the boathouse and distributed to officials during the day.

2) A safety briefing will be given upstairs in the club house at 07:30 by the organisers before boating starts, to the Race Controller, all marshals, and representatives of the Safety Boat and First Aid teams. A second briefing will take place at 13:00 for the second division.

3) Radios and loudhailers will be issued to all umpires, marshals and safety launches. Fully charged spare batteries will be carried for each radio. Two channels will be established, one exclusively for emergencies.

4) Officials will be encouraged to carry mobile phones with the numbers being held at Race Control so contact can be made easily if other communication methods fail. This is essential for the Safety Adviser and the Control Commission Umpire.

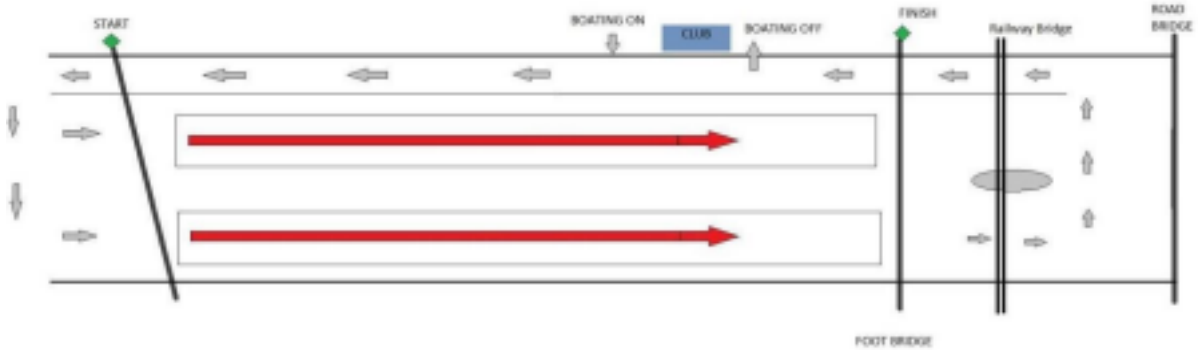
5) Any feedback or comments on the event safety cover should be sent to Paul Holmes. A meeting will be held in the week following the event to review the safety arrangements.

6) Access to be maintained to both the boating area and the trailer park in case required by emergency services.

Boating and circulation arrangements

Boating and circulation patterns for on and off the water have been designed to minimise congestion and collisions, and will be sent to competitors, posted on the web site and displayed by the boat house.

Circulation Pattern



Safety boats

Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA), a professional organisation specialising in boat handling and rescue techniques, will provide two safety boats, located at the start and finish of the course.

Marshals will be located at the following positions:

Between road and rail bridges	To direct crews to turn a safe distance upstream of the road bridge
Upstream of start	To hold crews upstream of the start until passage is clear of racing
Boating on	To ensure embarking crews remain out of the clubside racing lane
Boating off	To ensure disembarking crews remain out of the clubside racing Lane
Finish	To direct crews to continue downstream to safe turning point, and keep clear of racing crews
Boat yard	To direct crews through boat checking and pairing

Medical Provision

First Aid is provided by Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA), stationed in the car park of Worcester Rowing Club. Two crew members will be present as a minimum throughout the racing period. The medical staff will be given a copy of the Welfare Plan in advance of the event.

The nearest Accident and Emergency unit is located at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester, WR5 1DD (telephone 01905 763333) 3 miles from the regatta site. Journey time from the regatta site to hospital is typically 10 minutes. Ambulance access is clear through to the boat yard to the top of the steps descending to the river [and ambulance crews regularly use Grandstand Road as a standby location].

Accident and emergency procedures

Where an accident occurs on the water the following procedure will be adopted:

1) Racing will be stopped and crews prevented from boating immediately to allow safety boats to respond without causing unnecessary hazards.

2) The nearest safety boat (and any other appropriate assistance) will be sent to the incident by the Race Controller.

3) The safety boat's priority will be to retrieve the people from the water and if injured, return them to the boating area where the First Aiders will take over.
The second priority is to retrieve the boat.

4) First Aiders, Welfare Officers and Safety Advisers should be informed.

5) The Race Controller will co-ordinate the incident response and decide when hazards have been adequately removed so racing can recommence.

6) If emergency evacuation is required, this should be to the trailer park unless otherwise directed.

7) If required the relevant emergency services will be called by a member of the Organising Committee, club member or if necessary a member of the public.

Incident Reporting

Any incident or accident must be reported to one of the Event Organisers and the Event Safety Adviser. The Safety Adviser will record any incidents and log them on the BR website. Clubs who are involved in an incident have a responsibility to report it on the BR website.

Weather and river conditions

Some weather and river conditions may require the event to be changed, suspended or even cancelled to avoid unnecessary risk to competitors and officials. The decision on these actions will be taken as early as possible by the event committee including Safety Adviser, Race Controller, Club Captain and the lead Umpire. Although it is not possible to set exact rules for these decisions due to the number of variables that exist, a set of guidelines have been set out below:

Conditions	Possible control measures.
Lightning	Suspend racing and stop boating until 30 minutes after the last incidence of lightning witnessed. All participants seek safe shelter (tents and marquees not included) until 30 minutes after the storm has passed. Crews already on the water should be directed on how to leave the water as soon as possible by the marshals, which may include finishing the race.

Flooding (fast current and/or debris in water or on bridges)	- Cancel event. - Limit entries to senior rowers. - Increase safety boat cover.
Heavy rain	- Ensure appropriate clothing is worn at boat inspection point. - Limit entries to senior rowers.
Wind	- Cancel event. - Limit entries to senior rowers. - Increase safety boat cover. - Shorten course.
Snow/ice/ very low temperatures	- Ensure appropriate clothing is worn at the boat inspection point. - Limit entries to senior rowers. - Increase safety boat cover. - Arrange for salt to be spread around the boating area.
High temperatures/sustained sunshine	- Brief all crews and coaches on importance of covering up, use of sunscreen and hydration - Marshals and umpires to report any concerns of sunstroke/heat exhaustion to athletes, coaches and ultimately to Race Control.

Failure of safety arrangements

In the event of the loss of safety boat cover, umpire support, medical cover or communications breakdown, racing will be cancelled or shortened to reduce risks, unless appropriate cover can be arranged.

Slips and trips

The boating and trailer areas should be kept free from blades, shoes, trestles, etc. that will cause a trip hazard. The marshals working in these areas will monitor and arrange for equipment to be removed. Blades can be stored on the grassed area or on the large steps.

Spectators will not be permitted to sit on the steps or slope leading to river when boats are moving around. Trestles will be provided at the boat checking area for crews to rest and to allow small

repairs to be made. No competitor cars will be permitted on Club Car Park.

Hygiene

Toilets and washing facilities will be available at the rowing club. If utilities fail (water, sewerage or electricity) the event Safety Adviser will arrange for an appropriate utility or contractor to attend to rectify the problem.

No food or drink will be available from the WRC clubhouse if water supplies are lost. Litter bins will be provided and the trailer area is to be inspected after the event for unnecessary refuse. All food will be prepared in accordance with food hygiene regulations.

APPENDIX: Local Event Rules for Worcester Regatta

In general the race will be conducted in accordance with the BR Rules of Racing.

1. In the event of an incident where a competitor may be at risk the first responsibility of any following crew is to stop to avoid collision or impede rescue. The course is covered by Race Marshalls and Umpires who can summon safety boats and guide following crews.

2. The Marshalls and Umpires are responsible for advising the Chief Umpire of any incidents during racing or otherwise. Chief Umpire will provide an explanation of any penalty applied to the crew concerned if asked to do so.

3. Chief Umpire may award appropriate penalties for violations of the rules, including interference and breaches of safety regulations.

4. The Stage Marshal, in conjunction with the Chief Umpire, may refuse to allow a crew or a competitor to compete if it is judged that they are not competent to compete safely. In any such case the entry fee will be refunded.

5. Racing will not be delayed for late crews, they are responsible for getting themselves to boat, checking in good time for their race, typically 30 minutes before the actual race time. The starter may issue warnings to late crews, or disqualification in extreme cases.

6. Coaching from the bank is allowed.

7. In the event that we are required by an external authority to evacuate the site all crews and spectators must follow the instructions of race marshals and officials.

<u>Policy Statement</u>

The organising Committee of Worcester Spring Regatta believes that the welfare and wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults is paramount. All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion or ability, have equal rights to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and in an appropriate manner.

Aidan Melarkey is Welfare Officer for the event. She will act as the point of contact for any safeguarding concerns or allegations, and can be contacted on 07809 879645 or via Race Control located in the Regional Rowing Centre upstream of Worcester Rowing Club boathouse.

Reporting Structure

The first point of contact during the event will be the Welfare Officer. Any event reported will be discussed forthwith by the Welfare Officer and Event Organisers. If, after due consideration, they decide that the police should be informed, the Welfare Officer will report the matter to West Mercia Police.

The Event Organisers and the Welfare Officer will then decide whether the Welfare Officer will report the matter to the British Rowing Child Protection Officer.

Security

The event organisers brief all helpers on the Welfare Plan, and ask them to report any inappropriate behaviour to race headquarters.

The event attracts Junior competitors, who would usually be under the care of a parent or coach. A name and mobile telephone number is requested by the Entries Secretary for each club entering Junior crews. The list of contacts is held at Registration and Race Control so that the responsible adult can be contacted easily in case of incident. No personal contact details for children are held.

Photography

As the event takes place in open public areas, control of photography is not feasible. All helpers are briefed to respond to any inappropriate photography and report such to the Event Secretary or Race Control.